New Jersey Department of Education
Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability

Understanding Accountability in New Jersey for 2005 State Assessments

Background

Federal Requirements: The federal *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) requires all states to establish standards for accountability for all schools and districts in their states. Furthermore, it calls for the inclusion of *all* students, even students who may have been excluded or exempted from participating in state assessment programs in the past. The foundation for the accountability system is based on a state's academic content standards, which define what students should know and be able to do, and aligned assessments to measure whether students have mastered these standards. The accountability system looks at the degree to which students across schools and districts are mastering the state standards. NCLB has set the goal of 100% proficiency by the year 2014 with states setting incremental benchmarks for each grade-level cluster (grades 3-5, 6-8, and 11) and each content area.

New Jersey Requirements: To meet the federal requirements, New Jersey has adopted the New Jersey Single Accountability System. State assessments in language arts literacy and mathematics for the grade-level clusters (NJ ASK, GEPA, HSPA) are based on the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. *All* students enrolled in New Jersey public schools, plus *all* significant student subgroups must meet the proficiency benchmarks (see "New Jersey State Benchmarks for Adequate Yearly Progress" at the end of document) to ensure the goal of 100% proficiency, leaving no child behind. Students must score either "proficient" or "advanced proficient" on the assessments to be counted toward meeting the benchmarks. Schools are evaluated using adequate yearly progress (AYP) indicators. There are 40 indicators that must be met (including participation rate) plus secondary indicators. As an alternative, a safe harbor provision is applied to measure significant progress. When a school does not meet AYP, it may be designated as a "school in need of improvement."

To more fully explain how accountability is measured, this document outlines each step and checkpoint factored into calculating AYP for schools. Additionally, the attached table, "Accountability Worksheet," summarizes the accountability steps.

Calculating Adequate Yearly Progress

The following six-part process is applied to each content area—language arts literacy and mathematics.

Part I. Preliminary Data Checks

Step 1: 95% Participation

In concert with the call for inclusion, we must ensure the participation of all students in the state assessments. Therefore, the first questions are as follows:

- Did 95% of all students enrolled in the school, as of July 1st for grades 3, 4, 8, and 11 participate in the assessments, including limited English proficient (LEP) and special education students?

- Did 95% of all students within each student subgroup participate in the assessments? (Subgroups include: racial/ethnic groups, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities and LEP students.)

If a school or district answers "no" to either question, then AYP was <u>not</u> made. Participation results are considered for student subgroups of 40 or more. AYP is currently calculated for grade span 3-4, grade 8, and grade 11. As other grades are tested in future years, AYP will be calculated for grade spans 3-5 and 6-8 and grade 11. The student populations for grades 3 and 4 are aggregated for AYP calculations provided that the grades are housed in the same building. A minimum of 40 students is required for each aggregated subgroup.

Part II. Secondary Measures

Secondary measures must also be built into the final calculation of AYP, which uses cycle 2 data; they are <u>not</u> applied to the preliminary calculations. Standards for these measures must be met by the total school population in order to make AYP. (Secondary measures are applied to safe harbor also (see "Calculating Safe Harbor" below). The secondary measures are as follows:

- Graduation rate/dropout data for high schools: NCLB requires states to review graduation rate data that are calculated by determining the proportion of students graduating after four-year enrollment in the high school. This requires a student-level tracking system. For this year, the dropout rate data will be used. In subsequent years, graduation rate data will be the secondary measure.

- Attendance rate data are applied at the elementary and middle school levels. The ASSA report provides the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) data used for the attendance calculation. If safe harbor is used for any subgroup, district/schools are

notified and asked to report back the disaggregated attendance rate data by relevant subgroup and affirm the data by signing a Statement of Assurances.

The questions related to secondary measures are as follows:

- High Schools: If the school is a high school, was the school's dropout rate less than 2.6% or was it .5% less than the previous year?

- Elementary and Middle Schools: If the school is an elementary school or middle school, did the Average Daily Attendance for the school year reported on the ASSA meet or exceed 90%?

Again, if the answer to either question is "no," the school/district did not make AYP.

Part III. NCLB Conditions Applied to Test Scores

Step 1: Statistically Significant

It was determined that any student subgroup with fewer than 20 students—35 for special needs—is not statistically significant, for performance purposes. Therefore, prior to looking at subgroup performance, any group with less than 20 students—35 for special needs students—is suppressed for AYP. Since results for grades 3 and 4 (within the same school) are aggregated, the subgroup minimums are applied to the aggregated data. This means that if a subgroup includes less than 20 students (35 for students with disabilities) using the aggregated results, then the subgroup is calculated, but not considered for AYP performance.

Full flexibility is applied for LEP students. LEP student scores for students who have exited English language instructional programs for up to two years are included in the AYP calculations. The following questions should be posed:

- Are the results for subgroups with less than 20 students suppressed? 35 for students with disabilities?

- Are the results for all subgroups with 20 or more students reported? 35 for students with disabilities?

Step 2: Student Mobility

Because accountability applies to schools and districts and is a measure of their performance, the results of students who were *not* enrolled for a full academic year are pulled from the reported score lists. To facilitate this, at the time of test administration student booklets are coded. The test scores from newly enrolled or mobile students are not included when state performance data are analyzed. A student is considered in school less than a year (TIS<1) if the student has changed his/her residence and changed their school, that is, moved into the district or moved within the district, by July 1, 2004.

- TIS<1 does **not** apply if the residence of the student did not change, but the assigned school changed, either due to new school construction, district reconfiguration, or natural progression of grade span.

- TIS<1 applies if the residence of the student did not change, but the assigned school changed due to a charter school, private school, private transfer or school choice option transfer change.

At the time of test administration, the following question should be asked:

- Are all students who enrolled after July 1, 2004, and met the TIS criteria noted and are their results pulled from the accountability tally?

Step 3: Misclassification Rate

To protect against misidentifying any school or district as not meeting AYP, a 5% "misclassification rate" is applied to the AYP performance target for the total school population as well as that of each student subgroup. This condition is not applied for safe harbor calculations. The following question should be asked:

- Have 5 points been added to the total of actual performance of proficient and advanced proficient students for the total population and each subgroup?

Part IV. Review of Test Results

Step 1: Test Results for All Students

Once the score adjustments are made, actual student targets for the total enrollment and all student subgroups must be met. Calculations use aggregated test data; subgroup numbers are based on the aggregated data. IEP exempt applies to graduation requirements only; it does not apply to AYP calculations. The key questions to be asked when looking at student performance data are as follows:

- Does the "total population" pass rate attain the AYP benchmark? **Note:** Benchmarks have increased for 2005.

- Does *each* of the following student subgroups with 20 or more students attain the benchmark (35 for students with disabilities)?

  - White students
  - African-American students
  - Hispanic students
  - Asian/Pacific Islander students
  - Native American/Indian students
  - Other racial group students
  - Economically disadvantaged students

- Students with disabilities
- Limited English proficient students

If the answer to the first question is "no," and/or the answer to any student subgroup is "no," then for the total population and for each subgroup with a "no" response, a safe harbor calculation must be made in order to determine if the school made AYP. To make AYP, the *total population and all student subgroups must meet the target and/or safe harbor*.

Calculating Safe Harbor

For the total population and for each student subgroup that does not attain the state benchmark, then a safe harbor determination is made. To make safe harbor, there are two tests:

A. Proficiency for total population and subgroups
B. Secondary measures for total population and subgroups (final AYP)

Part V. Safe Harbor Proficiency Calculations

The proficiency calculation for safe harbor is essentially a measure of improvement, applied to each subgroup and the total population. For each subgroup, the pass rate from the previous year is compared to the current year's pass rate. If the "partially proficient rate" from the previous year is decreased by at least 10%, the subgroup has met the proficiency standard for safe harbor.

For example, in 2004, 30 percent of the LEP student subgroup scored proficient, thus there was a 70 percent "partially proficient rate." If the "partially proficient rate" is reduced by at least 10% in 2005, this student group will make safe harbor, assuming it also meets the secondary measure requirement (for final AYP only). Safe harbor is determined using aggregated data for grades 3 and 4. Since 2004 test data are not available for grade 3, grade 4 data determine if safe harbor is achieved for the aggregate total and subgroups.

The safe harbor calculation is shown below:

2004 results show	30% LEP students are proficient and 70% are not proficient ("partially proficient rate")
Then 10% of 70% =	7% increase in proficient rate
Then 30% pass + 7% proficiency increase =	37% proficient rate needed for LEP students to make safe harbor in 2005

This calculation must be done for *each* subgroup not attaining the benchmark. *All* subgroups must attain either the benchmark or the safe harbor 10 percent increase for the school to

make AYP. This calculation is also applied to the total population if the benchmark was not reached. For final AYP calculations, a final check for each subgroup is made using secondary measures.

The key questions to ask are the following:

- Does each subgroup not attaining the benchmark meet proficiency using safe harbor criteria—that is, reducing last year's "partially proficient rate" by at least 10%?

- Does the total population meet proficiency using these standards?

If the answer is "yes" for the *total* population and for *all* subgroups for which the safe harbor proficiency standard was calculated, the secondary measures must now be applied for final AYP calculations.

If the answer is "no" for the total population or *any* subgroup not meeting the benchmark or the safe harbor proficiency standard, then the school did not make AYP.

Part VI. Secondary Measures for Safe Harbor

For the *total* population and for *all* subgroups that have met the safe harbor proficiency standard, the secondary measures must be applied for final AYP determination. The key questions to ask are as follows:

- At grades 3, 4, and 8, does each subgroup meeting the safe harbor proficiency standard also have an average daily attendance rate of 90% or better?

If the answer is "yes," the group attained the secondary measure indicator and made safe harbor.

- At grade 11, does each subgroup meeting the safe harbor proficiency standard also have a dropout rate of 2.6% or less?

If the answer is "yes," the group attained the secondary measure indicator and made safe harbor.

If the answer is "no," then did the dropout rate for the group decrease by .5% over the previous year?

If the answer is "yes," the group attained the secondary measure indicator and made safe harbor.

<u>Final Question</u>

- Has the total population and each student subgroup that did not meet the benchmarks meet the proficiency standards for safe harbor (and the secondary measure indicators if calculating final AYP)?

If the answer is "yes," then the school has made AYP for this <u>content</u> area. The steps must be followed for each content area.

New Jersey State Benchmarks for Adequate Yearly Progress

Content Area	Test	Starting Point 2003	2004-2005	2007-2008	2010-2011	2013-2014
Language Arts Literacy	NJ ASK (3-5)	68	75	82	91	100
	GEPA (6-8)	58	66	76	87	100
	HSPA (11)	73	79	85	92	100
Math	NJ ASK (3-5)	53	62	73	85	100
	GEPA (6-8)	39	49	62	79	100
	HSPA (11)	55	64	74	86	100

ACCOUNTABILITY WORKSHEET FOR 2005 STATE ASSESSMENTS

Check one: **Mathematics**   **Language Arts Literacy**

		YES	**NO**	
• Were 95% of all enrolled students tested? Multiple measures: • Did the school meet ADA standards? (K-8) • Did the school meet dropout standards? (9-12)	• • •			If no, the school did not make AYP.
• Were all new (mobile) student results pulled out? • Were clustered students added to home school?	• •			If no, adjustments must be made during the record change period.
Test Results • Add 5% to all pass rates (to control for misclassification) • Pull out from review any subgroup w/less than 20 students (35 for special ed)	• •	√ √		Calculations made by NJDOE.

Did the following groups meet the benchmarks?	**Yes**	**No**		If no, for any group or the total population:	Did they meet secondary measures?	
				Did they meet S.H. proficiency standards?	**Yes**	**No**
• Total Students: Race/ethnicity • White • African American • Hispanic • Asian/Pacific Islander • Native American/Indian Student groups • LEP (includes English & Spanish tests) • Special Education (includes regular admin. & APA) • Poverty (free & reduced-price lunch)			• • • • • • • •	• • • • • • • • •		
				If yes is entered for each checkpoint, the school made AYP. Repeat for next content area.		